

METAL PENS.

One of Ancient Roman Make Has the Distinctive Slit.

Some curious one has collected a mass of interesting facts concerning metallic pens. Some of these references run back as far as the fourteenth and even the thirteenth century, and, curiously enough, in the case of the manuscript of Robert d'Artois, the forger scribe, is said to have used a bronze pen in order to disguise his writing and make his deception more safe. A Roman metal pen is said to have been found at Aosta, not a mere stylus, but a bronze pen slit, and there is some evidence of a pen or reed of bronze nearly as early as the invention of printing in the fifteenth century. More than a hundred years ago some steel pens were made in Birmingham for Dr. Priestly, and some of these placed into the hands of Sir Josiah Mason in his early days with Mr. Harrison, but all seem to have been lost. The first pen of metal of a definite date, beyond all question, is one in a Dutch patent book of 1717. At about the same time a polite ode of Pope's refers to a "steel and golden pen," but these were evidently luxuries only, and it was not until about the end of the first quarter of the last century that metallic pens became more generally in use. In the "Local Notes and Queries" in the Birmingham Weekly Post definite evidence has been given of steel pens as early as 1806 and more commonly in 1817, but it was about 1823 and 1824 that the great revolution came by which pens were made by a cheaper process—the hand screw press which pierced the pens from steel rolled into tube fashion and the joint formed the slit, but these required considerable labor to shape them into pen form. The use of the screw press belongs to the period of John Mitchell, Joseph Gillot and Josiah Mason, but on a careful review of the facts it seems to be clear that John Mitchell has the best claim to be considered as the original introducer of press made pens.—Buffalo Times.

PITH AND POINT.

Being worthless pays no dividends. Keeping a diary is nearly as hard work as keeping a dairy.

Being favorably impressed is the cheapest way we know of being a good fellow.

Nothing makes us quite so mad as to have people say, "What made you do it?"

It is terribly hard to impress people with the importance of aiding in a good cause.

Every one realizes when he goes to a photographer's that he is not looking his prettiest.

It is all right to do things for your town, but first do things for your home and family.

We are all pretty easily pleased when we consider that three or four times a day we see exactly how we look in the looking glass.—Atchison Globe.

Antiquity of Cheating.

False weights were found in the ruins of the oldest city that has yet been exhumed. And false weights will probably be consumed when the earth drops into the sun and the heavens are rolled together like a scroll. Ancient records and ancient statute books are full of evidence that every modern practical device down to adulterations and crooked scales was familiar to our ancestors of the plateau of Iran before the migrations. Vice is the old inhabitant; virtue is the newcomer, the immigrant, received with reluctance and compelled to fight for every inch of ground he gains.—Reader Magazine.

A Great Lack of Love.

There is a pleasant story being told just now of an Irish priest who, taking leave of his congregation, gave his reasons for going: "First, you do not love me, for you have contributed nothing to my support; second, you do not love each other, for I have not celebrated a marriage since I arrived; third, the good God does not love you, for he has not taken one of you to himself; I have not had a single funeral."—London Telegraph.

Why She Loved Her.

Mrs. Cummins—So you love your grandmamma, do you, Gracie? And why do you love her? Gracie—Because she used to punish mamma when mamma was a little girl. I hope she used to spank mamma as hard as mamma spanks me.—Boston Transcript.

The Flight of Birds.

One of the few men to recover sight after being blind from the birth of recollection was reported to have wondered at nothing so much as the flight of the birds. "Why do not people make more fuss about them?" he said.—London Outlook.

Faulty Theory.

Gus de Smythe—Those new boots of yours squeak awfully. Perhaps they're not paid for yet. Johnny—That's all nonsense. If there is anything in that why don't my coat and vest and my trousers and my hat squeak too?

Old Enough to Notice.

"Are your papa and mamma at home?" asked the caller. "No," replied little Marguerite; "one of them may be here, but they never are both at home at the same time."—Chicago Record-Herald.

A Serious.

"Some men are," remarked the beautiful heiress, "but I have no heart." "Oh, that doesn't matter," replied the poor but willing to be honest youth; "I'll give you mine."—Chicago News.

Fishing For Salmon.

Salmon fishing differs so much from trout fishing that it has been said an absolute beginner at fly fishing will learn to take salmon a lot more readily than will a trout fisherman who tries the nobler fish after years of practice with the smaller one. This I doubt, but I know that a very different style of fishing is needed. There is really no such thing as "striking" in salmon fishing, and if you keep a tight line and raise your rod as soon as you feel the "pluck" of the fish you will be doing your whole duty, and it will be up to the fish to do the rest. There is no occasion for the swift strike by which one hooks a shy trout inclined to rise a trifle short. The salmon is such a weighty fellow that when he turns to go down after taking the fly his momentum drives the hook above the barb with very little assistance on the part of the angler, provided the line be fairly taut.—Charles A. Bramble in Recreation.

Lost His Decoy.

A western man was describing a banquet that he had once attended in New York.

"I found this banquet interesting," he said, "and I was one of the last to leave. In the cloakroom, as I was putting on my hat and coat, I couldn't help noticing the woe-begone look on the attendant's face. The poor fellow appeared worried and sad, and every little while he sighed and muttered to himself.

"You seem disconsolate, friend," I said.

"I am disconsolate, sir," said the attendant.

"What is the trouble, sir," said I. "Haven't the guests tipped you well to-night?"

"The attendant answered in an excited voice:

"It's not only, sir, that they haven't tipped me, but they've taken the quarter that I put in the tray for a decoy."

How Inventions Are Made.

The great majority of practical inventions are made by a group of men of whom the public never hears. These men are members of one of the most complicated and highly organized of the modern professions. Every great manufacturing concern maintains, under one head or another, an "inventions department," employing men who are paid various salaries simply to develop inventions. They are supplied with every mechanical appliance to facilitate their work. The bills are paid by the company, and every invention they make is assigned to the company "in consideration of salary and one dollar." And it is these unknown men, grappling with the everyday, practical problems of great manufacturers, who make most of the inventions of immediate commercial value.—World's Work.

The Making of a "Corot."

There are two kinds of inferior Corots—the "Corot de commerce," which the dealers almost compelled the master to sell them, whereas he thought them hardly worthy of a frame, minor works such as a painter has about him and generally paints over, and the pictures of imitators which "Le Pere Corot" was too good natured to condemn. When the anxious owner brought him a beautiful landscape for authorization the old man was very reluctant to deny the work. "It is certainly not a Corot," he would say, "but it is so nearly one! It wants so little! Only that!" And he very often put "that" in on the spot and made a Corot of it.—London Chronicle.

Shades of Black Cloth.

A man who took his dress coat to his tailor and asked him to make a dinner coat to match learned something new.

"I have the same kind of cloth," said the tailor, "but it is not the piece from which your suit was made. No one will notice the difference, although I might as well tell you that no two pieces of black cloth, especially woollens, are exactly alike in color. There's no use hunting around town to find a better match than this one."—Chicago Inter Ocean.

A Little Absentminded.

Rufus Choate once tried to get a Boston witness to give his idea of absentmindedness. "Well," said the witness, who was a typical New England Yankee, "I should say that a man who thought he'd left his watch to him and took it out'n his pocket to see if he'd time to go home and get it was a little absentminded."

About All For Him.

Landlady—Mr. Starboarder is no longer one of the guests at my table. Friend—Why did he leave? Landlady—At my request. I asked him to say grace the other day, and he said, "O Lord, we need thy help to make us thankful for what we are about to receive!"—Cleveland Leader.

True to Life.

"Gracious, Elsie!" exclaimed the little girl's mother. "Why are you shouting in that horrible fashion? Why can't you be quiet like Willie?" "He's got to be quiet, the way we're playing," replied Elsie. "He's papa coming home late and I'm you."—Philadelphia Press.

Plenty of Servants.

"Does your wife have a great deal of trouble getting servants?" "Well, that depends upon what you mean by 'trouble.' She always has three servants—one at the house, one going and one coming."—Puck.

A Patient Lover.

She—I am surprised at Elsie. She was in love with that fellow long enough to know better than marry him. He—Yes, but too long to do any better.

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Antiseptic Tooth Powder (Riker's)	15c	Phitt's Chlorides	37c
Fear's Soap	10c	Phillips' Cocoa	33c
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There was a little fiddling and adjusting of tiny screws. Then the tyro said:

"Ugh! Ghastly! What have we here—a railroad wreck?"

"You are looking," answered the histologist, "at a part of the remains of a Ceylonese caterpillar."

He withdrew that slide and put another in its place.

"Another tragedy?" the tyro asked. "The remnants of a beetle," the histologist replied.

A third slide was placed beneath the lens.

"This," said the tyro, "should be a battlefield."

"It is only," returned the scientist, "a commingling of the desiccated fragments of a fly, a centipede, a moth and a slug."

The tyro yawned.

"Histology is interesting," he said in a bored voice. "Where did you get these specimens?"

"Out of a packet of tea."

"A packet of tea? What kind of tea?"

"Ordinary tea."

"Heavens! I am a tea drinker. Explain yourself."

The histologist, smiling, said:

"Tea grows on bushes. The leaves are plucked by hand. Imagine yourself stripping rosebush after rosebush, miles on miles, of their leaves. Well, that is what tea picking is like."

"The native pickers work fast. They pick as many as twenty-five pounds of leaves a day—a bundle bigger than a man."

"Now, the tea plant is the prey of a hundred insects, and the picker in his haste doesn't pause to brush off each leaf or to wash it, for he works, as we say, by piece work."

"The picked leaves are dried on charcoal fires. They shrivel under the heat and the insect, larvae and chrysalids among them change to dust. This dust looks to the ordinary eye like leaf fragments, but under the microscope it looks, as you remarked, like an insect railroad wreck or a pygmy battlefield. It tastes like—but you know as well as I do what it tastes like."

"Tomorrow," said the other, "I am going to bring some of my wife's tea here to examine with you."—New York Herald.

An Amended Quotation.

Miss Ida Tarbell's first journalistic experience was as editor of the Chautauqua. Her predecessor on the journal, once editor of the Oil City Derrick, had established the custom of heading with a quotation the column in which he made brief mention of the news of the day. Miss Tarbell followed his habit and bent her mind to the task of supplying suitable quotations. Once upon a time she set down, as plain as pen could set it:

"The meek eyed morn appears, mother of dews."

Then she went home, pardonably proud of knowing her Thomson so well, and at the head of the column next day she read:

"The weak eyed worm appears."—Washington Post.

A Lack of Firmness.

A very matter of fact Scotchman called to see a neighbor, an old Irish woman, who had been ailing for some time, when the following conversation took place at the door:

"And how do you find yourself today, Bridget?"

"Sure, your honor, I'm mighty bad. This shocking weather'll be the end of me. I'll be a dead woman before long."

"Hoots, toots, woman! Ye've been saying that for the last twenty years! I'll tell ye what it is—ye want firmness o' mind. Fin' a day for yer deeding and stick to it!"



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